



the brain injury association

HEADWAY OXFORD NEWSLETTER

Issue 7
May 2007

Dear All

I hope you enjoy our Headway Quarterly Website Newsletter, which appears on www.headwayoxford.org.uk

Thanks to all of you who contributed to this newsletter. If you would like to write something for the newsletter, please send it to jeanwykes@gmail.com or give it to Jackie by 1 July 2007 for our next Newsletter.

Remember our newsletter is only as good as your contributions make it, so please keep your contributions coming in.

From our Editor Jean Wykes



In our last edition of this Newsletter in January Laura Rideout requested a replacement kitten for her cat who unfortunately died. She is delighted to tell us that she has found one in the form of a baby kitten, which she will get when it's old enough to leave mum.

DAY CENTRE NEWS REPORT

By Alison Clements

March is a very busy month for the day centre:

The first week saw 32 of us heading off to Littlecote House for a three day break. The bad weather blew itself out by the end of the first day and we enjoyed ourselves in the warm glorious spring sunshine.

The staff were great and looked after us with great care as did the wonderful Charles Hatton.

Charles once again provided the coach and did the driving for us. He is an old friend of Headway and we are

eternally grateful to him for his continuing support.



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The information in this newsletter is as far as we know accurate. Headway, however, cannot accept responsibility for the quality of information, services or items provided by other people or organisations.

'BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS WEEK' WAS A GREAT SUCCESS

By Alison Clements

Steve Shears from Headway UK ran a workshop called 'Brain Injury and substance abuse' this was training for professionals who come into contact with head injuries. Twenty two people attended and all were very pleased they'd come along.



Friday the 16th was our Open Day and 'Grand Raffle draw'. We had about 70 people come through the centre. Everyone admired the wonderful art work that the members had done. (See our Exhibition in Kennington Health Centre.) We had turned each painting into a greetings card and together with Tom Morey's cakes we raised nearly £300 by selling them. We will be selling them from now on at £1.00 each or a pack of six for a fiver.

We would like to thank Vivienne Taylor and Jean Wykes who worked so hard on the raffle. Their efforts paid off when Bob announced that the raffle had raised £1300.

We would also like to thank Pauline Denton who spent hours persuading local businesses to part with their merchandise for our good cause.



Here is Tom who won Janet Minns' wonderful Spring Cake in the Raffle

Human table football took place on the 22nd at the Four Pillars Hotel Abingdon Rd. Headway had their own team this year and although we didn't win we had a good try.



Our team was a mixture of staff, volunteers and members. Jackie Goodwin, Lisa Gibbard, Sal Hodder, Tom Morey, Vaughan Evans, David Jarvis, Laura Williams and Lorna Nathaniel who won the 'Goal of the match award' when she slammed home a beauty with her left foot! The day raised £1000 and we are very grateful to Marshall and Galpin for organising it again.

WE HAVE SAID GOODBYE TO...

Our speech and language therapist volunteer Laura Williams, who's got herself a job in London. We are sad to see her go but wish her all success with her new job and new life in London.

Our volunteer physiotherapist, Sally Hodder, who is about to take up an appointment as a physiotherapist in Derby. We are sad to see her go but wish her all success with her new job.

Our volunteer Graham Longton, he has been with us for just over a year and we will miss him as will Kennington when he and his wife leave for their new life.

Our cleaner Helen Pringle, who has been doing a great job cleaning for us for the last 9 months. We wish her luck and thank her for finding a replacement for herself. Lyn Cripps will be starting after the Easter holidays.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

We don't usually list birthdays but I wanted to send a special wish to Ernie Lane. We all went to the pub on 23 March for a celebration lunch to mark his 85th.

Ernie has been coming to Headway for 17 years with his daughter Sandra. He is a splendid chap who makes everyone laugh and his devotion to Sandra and his kindness to all the members make him a bit special.



Ernie Lane (on left)

THREE DAY BREAK AT LITTLECOTE HOUSE HOTEL, HUNGERFORD MONDAY 5 TO WEDNESDAY 7 MARCH

Report by Sandra Parada

We all enjoyed the break at Littlecote House.

The grounds are beautiful, everything is so well maintained. The food was good, also the entertainment. The rooms were comfortable, the staff were very courteous and helpful.





There was a lot to do both outside and inside.



Pat said she had a good time. Ron brought her birthday present. Ron appeared in his "fancy dress" work clothes, and Pat was wearing her "Hat".

Pauline enjoyed the rest. Diana's sister Jackie came with her. Jan had to wear Pat's coat when she went outside for a cigarette, because it went quite cool in the evenings.

Unfortunately Jan developed a bad cold. Dad (Ernie) said she should have a tot of whiskey, also Chris wasn't very well. He had a chest infection, for which the local doctor prescribed antibiotics.

I know I can speak on behalf of everyone, "Thank-you Ali, it was a very relaxing three days."

T'AI CHI AND CHI KUNG CLASSES AT HEADWAY

By Louanne Richards

"WHEN YOU PRAY – MOVE YOUR FEET"

The old Chinese saying "When you pray - move your feet" appeared at the end of Al Gore's film "An Inconvenient Truth". This phrase summed up the depth of persistence and feeling that keeps Gore and countless others committed to the ecological struggle and ecological education.

"When you pray - move your feet" is also, for me, the mantra that expresses something essential about T'ai Chi. So much is written about the benefits and health giving properties of T'ai Chi and Chi Kung - about the martial arts roots and the relationship to Chinese medicine, etc. But when you stand (or even sit) quietly holding

a pose, or move into a very simple gesture, something connects - something happens. A different quality comes through the movement. Perhaps this is close to prayer; or rather, it is moving in a prayerful way.

A quite subtle and inexpressible opening seems to occur. We are on a level where all the discernable benefits of relaxation, flexibility, harmony of mind and body are taking place but also something else happens.

For a number of years I have been doing special needs T'ai Chi sessions at Headway in Oxford. I often ask myself these questions when I am on my way to teach at Headway:

- "How can an ancient Chinese martial art offer anything to a 21st

century person who has suffered trauma and head injury?"

- "Won't the Chinese terminology of Qi, Yin and Yang and the meridian system seem strange and archaic to these people, who are confronting so many everyday obstacles because of their disabilities?"

At the Headway sessions, I have frequently held back from introducing the Oriental view of the world, but when I do talk of these ideas I am often surprised and heartened to hear the response from this group. The response is always witty, intelligent and enthusiastic.

The Headway group really understand what we're trying to connect with - they put into practice "When you pray - move your one foot, move your arms, shoulders, head or move one side of your body"! They become at one with breath, movement and intention.

I have come to realize that these T'ai Chi students are in a special place vis-a-vis the world and its crazy cravings, needs and activity. Being 'stopped in your tracks' can be seen as (and certainly is) a disaster. But the crisis each one of them has been through, and the consequent necessity of changing and simplifying their lives, seems to draw out from each individual an honesty and a tolerant patience with things 'as they are'.

I think that this puts my friends at Headway into a very receptive place in relation to T'ai Chi.

Chinese thinking about life, death, illness, the cosmos, the earth, the body, the interdependence of the human being and Nature has a simplicity that is vert direct and also easily experienced. It is this simplicity of outlook that, I believe, acts as a means of connection for others, who by necessity are living more simplified lives.

"When you pray - move your feet".

A HUMOROUS LOOK AT HEADWAY THROUGH THE EYES OF ONE OF IT'S LONGEST SERVING MEMBERS PATRICIA BAKKER

If you've had a clonk on the head then Headway is the place to be. Ali and Lesley are wonderful, the girls in the offices are wonderful the committee is wonderful, the volunteers are wonderful and the other members are wonderful too, in fact we are all WONDERFUL

The other night I couldn't sleep so I slipped down stairs for a fag and a drop of the hard stuff! I can't go into my kitchen as my little dog sleeps there and I didn't want to disturb her. That's when I decided to write this letter.



I don't think in all the years I've been coming to Headway that I've said to my husband 'I don't want to go today'

I had a stroke 13 years ago, I wish I hadn't but having said that there are so many things that I've done and so many places that Headway has taken me that I would have missed out on.

I have made the most fantastic friends at Headway. We are quite an odd bunch of people some can do things better than others but we all muck in and help each other and we all support each other.

We tease each other all the time: for instance there is one chap who's

quite short so we call him 'Lofty' they call me 'Fag ash Lill' and my skinny husband is known as bones!

I enjoy the Tai Chi. Lou Anne who takes the class says we are the happiest group that she works with. Brain Gym and relaxations are with Carey and she's great.

I'm feeling tired again now so I think I'll go back to bed but I wanted to let you know how happy I am that Headway is in my life.

Patricia Bakker

HANDEL'S 'SAMSON' - 25 MARCH

Report by Jackie Goodwin and Bob Wilson

On the afternoon of Sunday 25 March a free concert was given at the Holywell Music Room in Oxford by the Kennington and District United Church Choirs. The Choirs were established in 1973 by Trevor Cowlett who lives in Kennington.

They have been raising money for charities ever since. A staggering £250,000 has been raised in 34 years!

The concert was a choral performance of Handel's 'Samson'. The lead roles were taken by Claire Barratt (Soprano), Rebecca Martin (Contralto), Ian Barratt (Tenor), Stephen Barratt (Bass) and John Oxlade (Piano). The Conductor and Director was Trevor Cowlett. The supporting Choir was 60+ strong. On this occasion all funds raised were to be donated to Headway.

Jackie and I arrived in good time with collecting tins and Headway

publicity material not really knowing what to expect.

The schedule was tight and Trevor allowed me just 2 minutes to "make a pitch" on behalf of Headway to a good audience and a patient Choir. We were treated to a magnificent performance in a very historic setting.

During the interval a collection of £720 was taken in a matter of a few minutes. To this was added a truly wonderful donation of £1000 from an anonymous donor. With Gift Aid the total raised for Headway will be £2000.

On my way home my mind was buzzing with the emotion of the very true and genuine generosity which Headway had received.

Many thank-yous to Trevor Cowlett and the choirs for all their hard work in staging this performance for our benefit.

DAVE WILSON AND GARY OLNEY SOUTH AMERICA CYCLE RIDE

Report by Bob Wilson

The Expedition has had a slow start bedevilled by very strong head winds in Tierra Del Fuego and southern Patagonia. The cycling duo decided to head west into Chile over some high passes and on to the Carretera Australis. This is a road put in place during Pinochet's Regime 30 years ago to give access to the remote mountain communities in southern Chile.

The scenery is magnificent but the going hard with limited supplies along the way. Having fought their way northwards for 3 weeks they have crossed back into Argentina and are now moving more rapidly and heading for the wine capital Mendoza.

They have been on the road for 70 days and the distance travelled is in excess of 2800 miles.

The encouraging news is that we have done very well on fund raising and the total is now more than of

£3700. Why not spur them on with a donation?

If you have an internet connection logon on to: www.southamericacycle.co.uk for the latest news, photographs and journals. You can even send a personal message by clicking on the forum box on the home page.



Donations can be sent to Bob Wilson, Manor Farm, The Green, East Hanney, Wantage, OXON OX12 0HQ (Cheques to Headway Oxford please).

For more information and Gift Aid forms call Bob on 01235-868389.

CONGRATULATIONS TO SALLY PINNIGER AND PATRICK O'CONNELL



Do you remember Sally Pinniger who was a member of Headway

Oxford for many years, and then moved to Banbury? Well... in September 2006 Sally and Patrick O'Connell became engaged. Congratulations to the happy couple photoed at Christmas.

They will be getting married on 14 September 2007.

Our very best wishes to them from all at Headway Oxford.

We would like to thank Pat Kennedy of Poppydown Quilters who raised over £200 for Headway Oxford at a recent event.

Forthcoming Events

On the **first Friday of the month** except January and December, we go to Oxrad in Marston where we enjoy uni-hoc, table tennis, pool, etc.

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Affordable Holiday?

Holiday Chalet - Reserved for wheel-chair users and severely disabled persons £200 weekly rental or £250 for parties of 4-6 people.

Iris Goodacre of Old Marston Tel 01865 250864 has a **2 bed Chalet** situated in a Holiday Village at New Milton, Hampshire between Bournemouth and Christ Church, near the New Forest. The 5 star holiday village has excellent amenities including a shop, restaurant bar, launderette, hairdresser, heated indoor and outdoor pools, and an entertainer for the children. The Chalet has a ramp, rails, sliding doors, etc. Ring Iris for further information on 01865 250864

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22 May - Open Day for Professionals

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9-11 July - Headway Holiday in Bournemouth

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13-15 July - "Way Ahead Weekend" Warwick University price £120 per person. Phone Jackie if you are interested 01865 736319

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17 August - Reserve this date to boogie under the marquee in the garden at Headway House, Church of the Good Shepherd.

Volunteers for our Day Centres

We urgently need volunteers at our day centres which meet on Tuesdays and Fridays from 10.00am to 3.00pm and Wednesdays 11.00 am to 2.30 pm. If you feel you can spare a few hours please contact Alison Clements on 01865 739373. It would be good to have people interested in Art and Crafts, computer work, learning to drive the mini-bus or training (free) with the Red Cross so that they can offer hand manicure and massage. Do you know anyone who may be interested? Please give them our number.

Headway meets at:

Church of the Good Shepherd,
4 Bagley Wood Road,
Kennington,
OXFORD, OX1 5LY
Tel: 01865 739373

Come along and join us.

USEFUL PEOPLE and THINGS TO KNOW

Check our Web site www.headwayoxford.org.uk

C&C Tyres and Exhausts, Unit 7 & 8 Minister Industrial Park, Downs Road, Witney.
For new tyres, new exhaust systems and batteries. 01993 702066

Bobby and the Beeb - Live Music for your Party 01865 730692

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"Sweet Pea Designs" - Award winning Card maker.

Quality hand made cards to order for all occasions.

To discuss your requirements, please call Pauline on 07976311378 or email sweetpeadesigns@hotmail.co.uk

All proceeds from the sale of cards donated to Headway Oxford.

Child Brain Injury Trust www.cbituk.org

Who are we? The Child Brain Injury Trust (CBIT) is a UK-wide charity offering support and information on acquired brain injury in children.

Stress-busting massage sessions with Sue Colclough

Headway would like to offer you, as a carer, the chance to try a taster relaxing massage session with Sue, followed by up to five more sessions, all free to you thanks to a grant from our funders in Social & Community Services.

Sessions will take place at 264 Marlborough Road, Oxford which is near the Abingdon Road – map available if needed.

Phone Jackie Goodwin on **01865 739373**